

Don Ingpen
Speech to Pre 1930s Reunion Group in 1988.

Some of you will remember the morning assemblies in the Morrison Hall with Bill Samson and Ray Dixon leading the community singing. One of the songs was 'Forty years on, afar and asunder.....what were we like in our work and our play'. That is now sixty years back and we are still not yet asunder. I have received apologies from some prevented from being with us. Firstly, Charlie Newman who was Dux of the school in 1929 is suffering from war injuries; a result of fighting on the Kokoda Trail in World War II where he served with distinction. I had a message from Max and Milton Lamb who both played in the 1927 Championship football team. Also a note from Doctor Don Duffy. I visited Lex Rentoul a short while back and mentioned the reunion. His response was 'Don't whet my appetite'.

It is great to see Alex McGregor, Jack Bromell and Ray Gough who all played in the 1927 Championship football team. As Jack kindly said 'I got a game too'. They were the years when Vic Profitt brought new life into the school football. In 1925 College won the premiership. My two elder brothers played in that team, his first big success. Then came 1927. Vic produced great players like Elson Matheson - a great mark and perfect kick. With Milton Lamb full back, Jack Bromell a very solid reliable half-back, Alex McGregor dominating the half-forward play and Ronnie Greeves and 'Fish' Whiting kicking the goals - also Ray Gough, Ewen Bumpstead and others, many of you will well remember so well. We had a great team. We all, I am sure, remember the follow up holiday trip to Adelaide with Vic Profitt scrounging a breakfast of raisin bread for us on the train.

The Hassetts were a very central part of the life of the school during the late 1920 era. All three Dick, Vin and Lindsay created fun and entered fully into all activities with great zest. I remember a cricket match against Geelong Grammar when Lindsay was a mere 14 years of age. Des Doyle bowled a medium off break which turned sharply to leg. Grammar had a strong batting partnership going at the tea adjournment. As we resumed the field Lindsay said to Des 'On the fifth ball of your next over, put down your usual bowl and direct it on the middle stump breaking away to leg'. Lindsay who was fielding at first slip moved over to short fine leg as Des bowled. The batsman fell for the trap and Lindsay took an easy catch breaking the partnership. No wonder he later became a great Australian captain.

I am now standing behind the lectern which will bring back memories for many, of the morning assemblies in the Morrison Hall, with the Head leading the school in a short Christian Worship period and with some penetrating thoughts for our betterment. I remember the morning when from that assembly the Head awarded Don Cochrane the best sportsman of the year. Don was a victim of poliomyelitis and spent his life in a wheel chair or on crutches - but never missed an important game and at all times a most enthusiastic supporter and entered into everything within his capacity.

I did remember to mention Bob and Colin McArthur - head prefects in my first years. Then of course, there was Lex Rentoul, followed by Don McKenzie and my late brother Lane. The great year of Alex McGregor followed on. Then came the late Jock Adam's year. Apart from his many other accomplishments, Jock in his year raised funds and had installed the school clock in the Norman Morrison Hall tower. It was great to see 'Doc' Hicks among those present. He too, had a great year in 1930.

The late Dr Gordon McDonald told me of one of his vivid recollections of the late Sir Francis Holland. At the time the Head had issued an edict that boys were not to loll about the school grounds with hands in pockets during matches while visitors were about. Watching a cricket match, McDonald heard the voice of the Head behind him; 'McDonald I see you have your hands in your pockets. After school tomorrow report to Teddy Rankin and borrow a tool and weed the oval for half an hour'. Next day whilst weeding McDonald realized he was not alone. Then the quiet voice of the Head said 'McDonald after I had spoken to you yesterday, I realized that I too had 'my hands in my pockets', so I have given myself the same punishment'. (Many of you will remember Mr Rolland often stood watching cricket with hands in the side pockets of his jacket).

This is the second time in my life that I have been called upon to speak on this site. The first time was in 1929. At the time military training was compulsory for school cadets - (you will remember the difficulty we had getting our puttees on properly.) At the time of laying the foundation stone for this magnificent Dining Hall, we were on military training at Puckapunyal. The Head paid me the compliment of being recalled to the school to speak on behalf of the students.

On looking back over school records I came across a gem recorded by our Mr Bert Keith in his 'The Lives of Frank Rolland'. Mr Rolland is there quoted: 'A Head Master is very careful never to do anything, because he never knows when he may be called upon to do something'. I am sure our present Head Master, Paul Sheahan has little opportunity of doing nothing and I am sure he is always ready when called upon to do something.